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MAXX

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THE MAXX™

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I HOPE **MAXX** WILL BE ALL RIGHT AT HOME. HE'S REPAIRING A **LAMP** FOR ME. LAST TIME HE **SLUICED** HIS HANDS **SHUT!** HIS **CLAWS 'N' EVERYTHING!**

BRRR! HOW CAN YOU **SLEEP** WITH THAT...**THING** HANGING AROUND YOUR HOUSE? HE'S SO...**SCARY! VIOLENT! UNCOOL!**

AW, **MAXX** IS OKAY. HE'S **SAVED** MY LIFE A COUPLE OF TIMES. I THINK HE'S GOT A **GENTLE SOUL**.

YEAH, LIKE I'M CONSTANTLY CONFUSING **MAXX** WITH **MOTHER TERESA**.

BESIDES, I COULDN'T SLEEP **BEFORE** I MET HIM, NOT FOR YEARS. I STILL CAN ONLY GET A **COUPLE HOURS** A NIGHT.

YEAH, I'M LIKE **TOTALLY** WEIRDED OUT MYSELF AT NIGHT. I THINK IT'S ALL THIS **VIOLENCE** WE LIVE WITH. IT MAKES US JUMPY AS CATS! MOVIES... TV... VIDEO GAMES...

DON'T YOU THINK **SOME** OF THAT'S IN THE EYE OF THE **BEHOLD-ER?**

I MEAN HERE WE ARE, JUST HANGING OUT, GETTING A TAN--HARDLY GLAMOROUS, BUT SOMEONE COULD READ **PIN-UPS** JUST IN THE WAY I'M STANDING HERE.

MAYBE. BUT I DON'T WANT SARAH TO GROW UP IN A WORLD FILLED WITH **VIOLENCE AND FEAR** AND **GENDER HATRED**.

SHE'S AT THE HOSPITAL TODAY PICKING UP ONE OF HER FRIENDS WHO WAS **ATTACKED** BY THAT **SERIAL RAPIST** A FEW MONTHS AGO.

MY WOMEN'S GROUP IS GOING TO BE MONITORING TV SHOWS FOR **VIOLENT CONTENT...**

LIKE I'M NO **CENSOR**, JULIE, BUT KIDS SEE SO MUCH **BAD STUFF** IN THAT...

"...BOX..."

SEE, LOOK IT,
HENRY! I TOLD YOU!
THERE'S A GUY INNA
BOX!

"...THEY
JUST DON'T
RELATE..."

LOOKS
LIKE HE'S BEEN
DEAD A LONG
TIME!

"...WHEN
THEY SEE..."

WHACKY
COOL, PETE.
HE LOOKS ALL
SOFT AND GLUSHY!
DO YOU THINK
WE C'N MOLD
HIM LIKE
CLAY?

"...REALITY."

THAT'S
NOT A GOOD
IDEA, KIDS.

WHADDA
YOU CARE,
YOU...YOU...
YOU...?

HEY, I KNOW
YOU! YOU'RE THE

DRAGON!

THAT'S
MY PRONOUN,
SON. DON'T
WEAR IT OUT.

RIGHT. I'LL TAKE
OVER NOW. YOU RUN
ALONG. I'M IN PURSUIT
OF A DANGEROUS
PSYCHOPATH. THE
OFFICERS AND I WILL
TIDY UP HERE.

HAHA. THE
COPS IN THIS
TOWN SURE
ARE SHORT!

BOY, THE
OTHER KIDS'LL
BE DISS'D WHEN
THEY FIND OUT WE
MET TH' SAVAGE
DRAGON!

YEAH, BUT
MY PET OCELOT,
NIETZSCHE, AN'
ME WANNA KNOW
WHO'S THE CRAZED
PSYCHOPATH
YOU'RE LOOKIN'
FOR...?

"HE'S A WHACKED-
OUT BLOOD JUNKIE
WITH A MEAN
STREAK. THEY
CALL HIM MAKO.

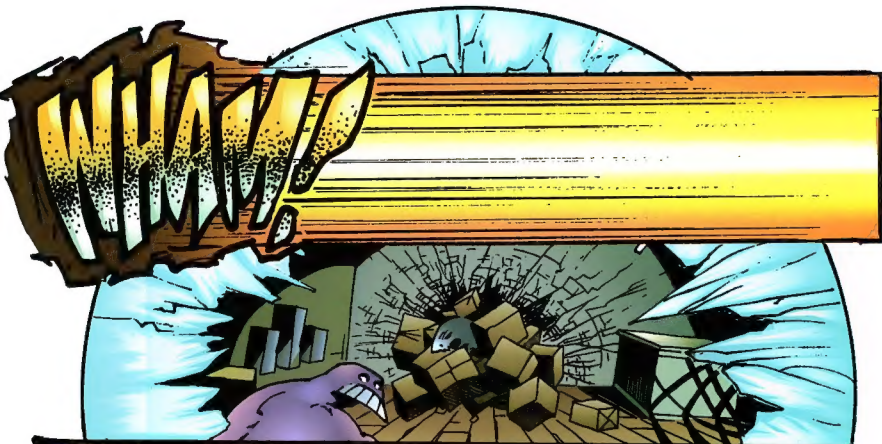
THERE'S
THE
PLACE...

"I PITY THE POOR
SCHMUCK WHO
COMES UP AGAINST
HIM ALONE..."

HELLO
DINNER!

JEEZ! A LAND
SHARK! THIS STUFF
ALWAYS HAPPENS JUST
AFTER I GLUE MY
HANDS SHUT OVER
MY CLAWS! I
HATE THAT!





YOU DICKED
ON PURPOSE,
MAUVE-BOY! NOW
I'M GONNA DO
YOU SLOW!

SO, YOU
REALLY WANT
TO GET INVOLVED
IN COUNTING "ANTI-
SOCIAL ACTIONS"
IN SILLY COP
SHOWS?

I KNOW SOME OF THESE
GROUPS ARE FANATICS,
JULIE, BUT WE HAVE
TO DO SOMETHING.

I MEAN ONLY A
COUPLE HUGE CORPO-
RATIONS OWN MOST OF
THE MEDIA IN THIS COUNTRY
AND THEY KEEP SHOVELING
INCREASING AMOUNTS
OF VIOLENCE AT US...

"ALMOST AS IF THEY
KNOW WHAT THE
WORST PART OF
LIS WANTS..."

WHEEESH. HOT
BABY! I LIKE
THIS!

YOUR FLESH
WILL MELT OVER
MY TEETH LIKE
JELL-O!

SO HARD IT
HITS YER
TUMMY LIKE
LIGHTNING?

H!, AGAIN!

AND WHEN THEY
MAKE BIG NOISES
WHEN THEY HIT,
THAT MAKE THE
SOLES OF YER
FEET TINGLE...

I'M TALKIN' T'YOU FROM
INSIDE JULIE'S HEAD,
TILL I GET MY OWN BACK.

THIS IS WHERE
SHE KEEPS ALL
THE STUFF SHE
LIKES THAT AINT
NICE!

I'LL SUCK
THE BLOOD FROM
YOUR JAGGED,
SPURTING WOUNDS
AND LAUGH!

AIN'T IT GREAT
WHEN THEY TALK
DIRTY?

BOOM!

JUJUH.
WHERE...?

GOTTA
RUN!

BRUTAL...

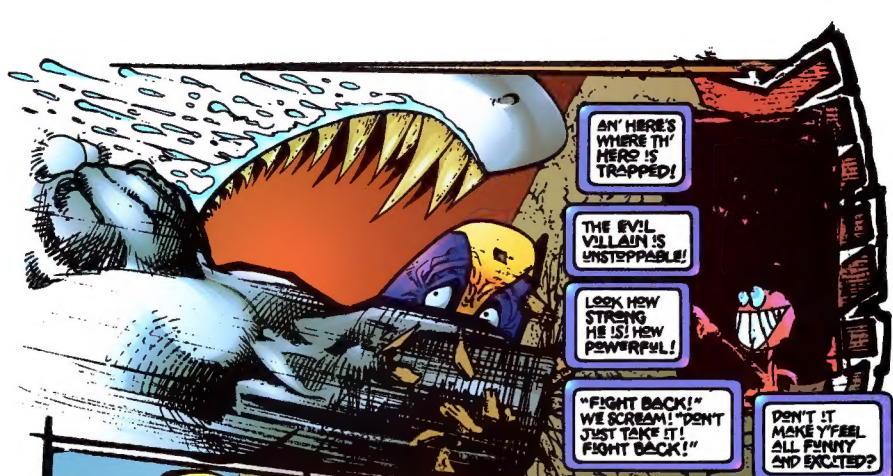
...ANIMAL...

...INSTINCTS!

LIKE THE SPITTLE
RUNNING DOWN THE
BAD GUY'S TEETH, AND
THEY'RE ALL POINTY
AND UNEVEN! MAKES
ME HOT!

HE'S STILL
ALIVE?

DYIN'
TIME!



AN' HERE'S
WHERE TH' HERO IS
TRAPPED!

THE EVIL
VILLAIN IS
UNSTEPPABLE!

LOOK HOW
STRONG
HE IS! HEW
POWERFUL!

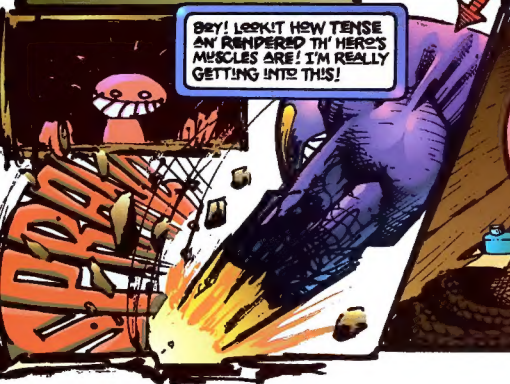
"FIGHT BACK!"
WE SCREAM! "DONT
JUST TAKE IT!
FIGHT BACK!"

DONT IT
MAKE Y'FEEL
ALL FUNNY
AND EXCITED?



MAYBE
THIS'LL
STOP
HIM!

I GOTTA
FIGHT BACK
SOMEHOW!



BRY! LOOKIT HOW TENSE
AN' RUMPERED TH' HERO'S
MUSCLES ARE! I'M REALLY
GETTING INTO THIS!

IF PEOPLE
HANT VIOLENCE,
THERE'S NOTHING
WE CAN DO TO
STOP THEM!

MAYBE, BUT
WE CAN AT LEAST
LET THEM KNOW
HOW MUCH VIO-
LENCE SWIRLS
AROUND THEM ALL
THE TIME...LIKE
BLASS IN THE
AIR!

I LIKE
YOUR HAIR
LIP LIKE
THAT, BY
THE WAY.



GEE, IT'S
STARTING TO
RAIN...MAYBE
WE SHOULD
GO IN.



I KNOW THIS GUY! HE'S ONE OF SAVAGE DRAGON'S THIRD RATE VILLAINS!

GREAT. I DON'T EVEN GET TO FIGHT OTHER GUYS VILLAINS... I HAVE TO FIGHT THE LACKEYS OF OTHER GUYS VILLAINS!

OUCH... I THINK I CUT MY FOOT BACK THERE!

BLOOD! SMELL BLOOD!

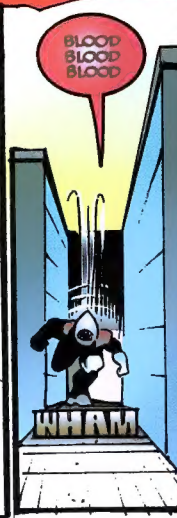
BLOOD
BLOOD
BLOOD
BLOOD

HEY!

NO FAIR!



SORRY, TOOTH-BOY! I'M OUTTA HERE!



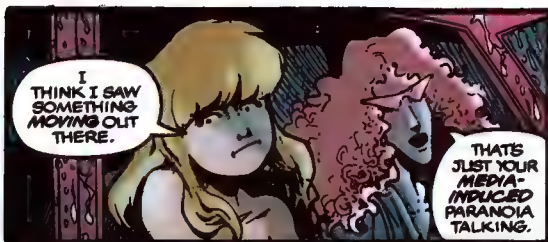
BLOOD
BLOOD
BLOOD



BLOODBLOOD
BLOODBLOOD
BLOODBLOOD...



IT WON'T
START.
MAYBE
THE BATTERY'S
DEAD.



I
THINK I SAW
SOMETHING
MOVING OUT
THERE.

THAT'S
JUST YOUR
MEDIA-
INDUCED
PARANOIA
TALKING.



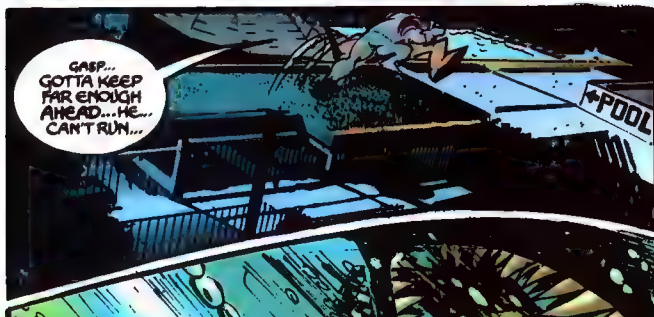
I'M
CALLING
THE AUTO
CLUB...



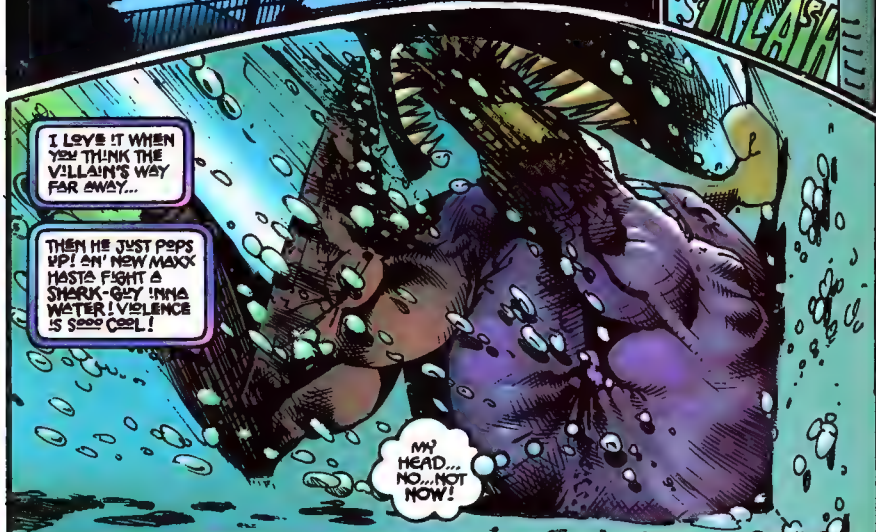
Uh-huh.
Uh-huh.



I DUNNO IF
THAT GUY SPOKE
ENGLISH.



GASP...
GOTTA KEEP
FAR ENOUGH
AHEAD...HE...
CAN'T RUN...



I LOVE IT WHEN
YOU THINK THE
VILLAIN'S WAY
FAR AWAY...

THEN HE JUST POPS
UP! AN' NEW MAXX
HASTA FIGHT A
SHARK-GUY INNA
WATER! VIOLENCE
IS SOOO COOL!

MY
HEAD...
NO...NOT
NOW!

CHUNG CHUNG CHUNG CHUNG CHUNG



I AM THE
JUNGLE
QUEEN!

RULER
OF THIS
WORLD!



SHE HAS
DARK HAIR!
I THOUGHT
SHE WAS A
BLOND...?


AN' HOW
COME SHE
LOOKS LIKE
A BAD
PAPERBACK
COVER?



I DUNNO.
THIS IS YOUR
DREAM, MAXX!



SO HOW
COME YOUR HAIR
IS BLACK NOW?



AND IF YOU'RE
A LEOPARD
QUEEN, WHERE'S
YOUR LEOPARD?



I HAVE
BEEN CHANGED.
CRUELTY AND
PAIN HAVE
CHANGED ME.



AND MY
LEOPARD
IS DEAD.

UHHH...
I'M BACK.

I WAS
LUCKY LAST
TIME... IF HE
LANDS ON ME
THIS TIME
I'LL BE
CRUSHED!

YOU KNEW WHAT'S GREAT?
WHEN THE HERO AND
VILLAIN ARE BOTH REALLY
MESSED UP, LIKE ALMOST
TO DEATH, Y'KNEW?

I
REALLY HATE
THIS!!

CRUNCH!

BLOOD.

BLOOD
SMELL
CLOSE
GOOD
GOTTA
HAVE IT

RIGHT. LIKE
THAT'S GONNA
HAPPEN.

**RIPTEAR
REND SUCK
KILL BLOOD
KILL**

BLOOD!

BLOOD
BLOOD!

BLOOD
BLOOD
BLOOD!

BLOOD BLOOD
BLOOD BLOOD!

OKAY,
SO MAYBE
HE'S NOT
A TOTAL
LACKY.

GNUUUHH!
BLOOD
CRUSH
PRINK!

TOO CLOSE!
TOO CLOSE TO FAIL!
KILL CRUSHH
SUUCKK!

GREAT!
SOUNDS LIKE
THE CLOSER HE
GETS TO HIS
PREY, THE MORE
STIMULATED
HE IS!

I'M WAY
WAY OUT OF
MY LEAGUE
HERE!

BAOON

**BLOOD
SMELLERY
CLOSE AT
TEAR AND
KILL**

I REALLY LIKE IT WHEN
TH' HERO IS CORNERED
AND TH' VILLAIN IS
HAMMERIN' EN HIM.
KNOW WHY?

'CAUSE THAT JUSTIFIES
ANYTHING TH' HERO DOES
T' HIM LATER... NO
MATTER HOW GROSS!

I'M A
LITTLE FASTER
THAN HE IS... GOTTA
KEEP AHEAD OF
HIM...

JUST
cords

I'LL
DUCK IN
HERE...



GAHH!
TELEPHONE
CORDS!
EVERYWHERE!
AND THAT
SMELL!

IT'S
SOLVENT.
WE'RE CLEAN-
ING THE CORDS
TODAY.

LISTEN!
YOU GUYS GOTTA
RUN! THERE'S A BIG
MONKIN' SHARK-
GUY ABOUT THREE
HEARTBEATS
BEHIND ME AND...

GAWD,
I HATE MY
LIFE...!

BLOOD
LOVEBLOOD
LOVE

GEEKIE,
YOU GOT NO
IDEA HOW TIRED
I AM OF
HEARING YOU
SAY THAT!

IF
ONLY MY
CLAWS WERE
FREE...

HEY, WAIT
A SEC... THE
SOLVENT MOST'VE
DISSOLVED THE
GLUE!

MY CLAWS
ARE
FREE!

LOOKIT THAT! YAH CN
SEE HIS VEINS AND
RIPPED MUSCLE AND
GRISTLE! BEY 'S HE
MAD! I BET WE'RE
GENNA SEE SOMETHING
NOW! SOMETHING...



...CRASH!

BOY, THE
COPS IN THIS
TOWN SURE ARE
SHORT!



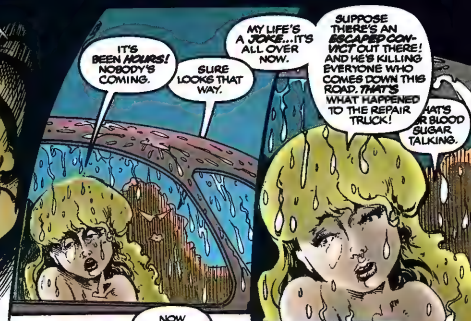
A RANDOM
SPARK MUST HAVE
IGNITED THE
SOLVENT THEY WERE
USING, AND THIS
THE GAS LINE...



LOOKY,
DOOKY,
CHIEF -
MURDER!

WE
FOUND
MURDER!
ONE OF
THEM!

WAA, THAT'S
NOT MURDER.
THAT'S JUST
SOME POOR
DERELICT.



IT'S BEEN
ACQUAINT!
NOBODY'S
COMING.

SURE
LOOKS THAT
WAY.

MY LIFE'S
BEEN ACQUAINT'S
ALL OVER
NOW.

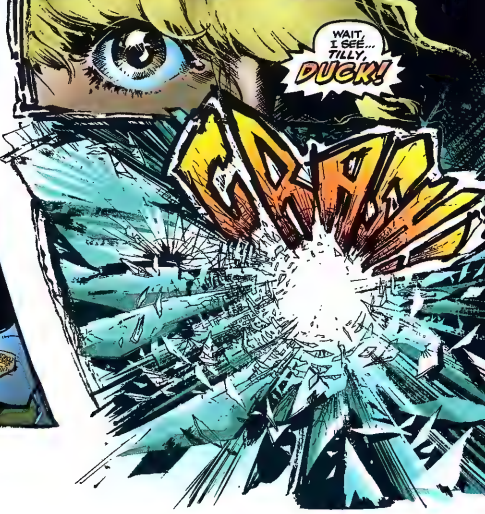
SUPPOSE
THERE'S AN
ACQUAINT'S
DOWN THERE!
AND HE'S KILLING
EVERYONE WHO
COMES DOWN THIS
ROAD. THAT'S
WHAT HAPPENED
TO THE REPAIR
TRUCK!

HATS
SUGAR
TALKING.

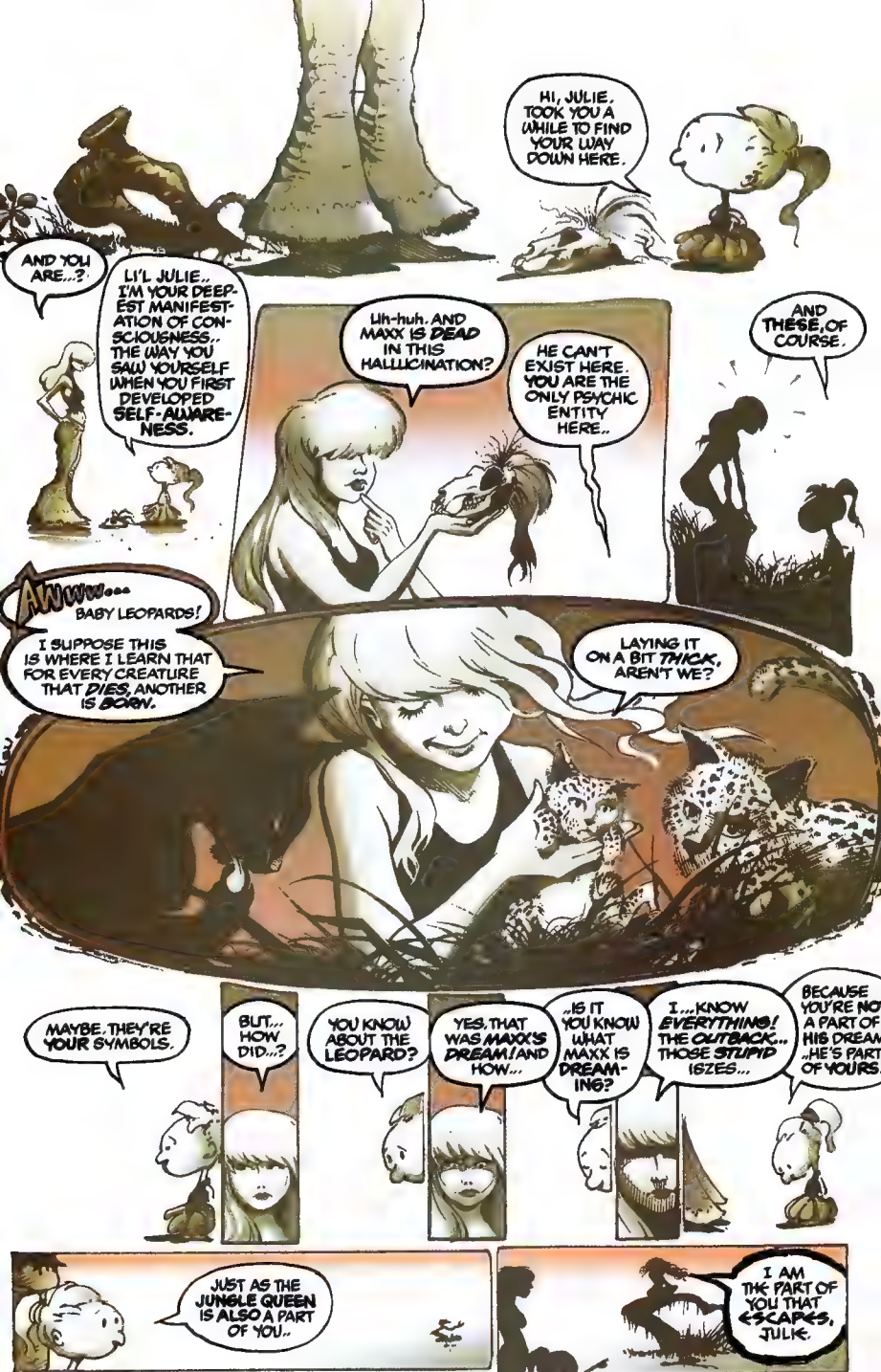


NOW
HE'S CUT
THERE...

WATCHING
US... WITH A
LENGTH OF PIPE!
GETTING
CLOSER...
CLOSER...
CLOSER...



WAIT!
I SEE...
TILLY!
DUCK!



HI, JULIE.
TOOK YOU A
WHILE TO FIND
YOUR WAY
DOWN HERE.

AND YOU
ARE...?

L'I'L JULIE..
I'M YOUR DEEP-
EST MANIFEST-
ATION OF CON-
SCIOUSNESS..
THE WAY YOU
SAW YOURSELF
WHEN YOU FIRST
DEVELOPED
SELF-AWARE-
NESS.

Uh-huh. AND
MAXX IS DEAD
IN THIS
HALLUCINATION?

HE CAN'T
EXIST HERE.
YOU ARE THE
ONLY PSYCHIC
ENTITY
HERE..

AND
THESE, OF
COURSE.

Awwww...
BABY LEOPARDS!

I SUPPOSE THIS
IS WHERE I LEARN THAT
FOR EVERY CREATURE
THAT DIES, ANOTHER
IS BORN.

LAYING IT
ON A BIT THICK,
AREN'T WE?

MAYBE THEY'RE
YOUR SYMBOLS.

BUT...
HOW
DID...?

YOU KNOW
ABOUT THE
LEOPARD?

YES, THAT
WAS MAXX'S
DREAM! AND
HOW...

..IS IT
YOU KNOW
WHAT
MAXX IS
DREAM-
ING?

I...KNOW
EVERYTHING!
THE OUTBACK...
THOSE STUPID
16ZES...

BECAUSE
YOU'RE NOT
A PART OF
HIS DREAM
..HE'S PART
OF YOURS.

JUST AS THE
JUNGLE QUEEN
IS ALSO A PART
OF YOU..

I AM
THE PART OF
YOU THAT
ESCAPES,
JULIE.

I REFLECT
WHAT'S INSIDE,
JULIE.

I AM THE IMAGE OF
STRENGTH AND INDEPENDENCE
YOU FELT BEFORE YOU WERE
VIOLATED.

BUT AS I
ABSORB MORE
TRAUMA, MISERY,
AND BITTERNESS,
I CHANGE.

I FEAR
WHAT I AM
BECOMING,
JULIE.

BUT NOW THAT
YOU HAVE SEEN...
ALL THIS... THE
WORLD CAN
NEVER BE...

...THE
SAME...

...SIZE
AGAIN.

REFLECTING?
SO SHE'S MY
SUBCONSCIOUS?
WHY IS MAXX
DREAMING HER?

YOU THINK
TOO MUCH. LET'S
PLAY.

SO SHE'S MY
ID AND YOU'RE
MY SUPEREGO?
SO WHAT'S MAXX?
MY ANIMUS?

IT'S NOT THAT
SIMPLE. THIS AIN'T
PSYCH 101. YOU
NEED A SPIRIT-
ANIMAL TO GUIDE
YOU THROUGH IT
ALL.

SPIRIT-ANIMAL
HUH? LIKE A CHIP-
MUNK? HOW DO
I FIND ONE?

YOU
ALREADY HAVE.

JUST KEEP
COMING BACK
HERE TO PLAY
WITH ME..

..AND
HELP ME..

..GROW
UP.

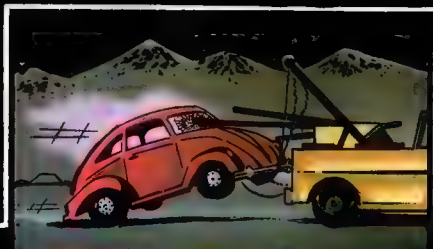
I DON'T
SUPPOSE I'LL
REMEMBER ANY
OF THIS WHEN
I WAKE UP?

OH, NO. THIS
STUFF IS BURIED
SO DEEPLY, IT'LL
TAKE YOU YEARS
TO WORK
THROUGH!

155

SO THAT'S THE STORY.
EVERYTHING'S ABOUT
THE SAME...

OH YEAH. THERE WAS
A MANIAC THAT NIGHT. IT
WAS THE IDIOT DRIVING THE
TOW TRUCK, WHO KNOCKED
A HOLE THROUGH THEIR
WINDSHIELD.



FUNNY THING, JULIE DIDN'T EVEN
HAVE A HEADACHE. AND SHE'S BEEN
SLEEPING LIKE A BABY EVER SINCE.



SARAH BROUGHT
GLORIE OUT OF
THE HOSPITAL.
THERE ARE SOME
SCARS, BUT GLORIE
SEEMS...ALMOST
OKAY. I DUNNO.




I WONDER HOW
MAKO FOUND ME?
IT WAS LIKE MR.
GONE WAS STILL
CRUISING AROUND.
BUT HE'S DEAD.



OF COURSE, I WOKE
UP IN A PATROL CAR
FILLED WITH ISZES.
THAT WAS BAD. I HAD
TO BREAK A PANE OF
BULLET PROOF GLASS
TO ESCAPE.

SO, WHO KNOWS?
I KNOW I DON'T.



I ENDED UP
BACK IN MY
BOX IN THE
ALLEY.

LOOKS LIKE
THINGS ARE
GONNA GET
A LOT MORE
DANGEROUS
FROM HERE
ON OUT.

ANYBODY WHO
CAN HIRE MARO
TO KILL ME, CAN
SEND GUYS EVEN
TOUGHER.

MMMM...

DID YOU KNOW
THEY CANCELLED
CHEERS?

YEAH, JULIE
TOLD ME THE
OTHER DAY.

I KNOW ALL THOSE
PEOPLE WERE
PLAYED BY ACTORS
AND STUFF, AND
THEY ALL GOT NEW
JOBS.

EVEN SO, IT'S
LIKE THEY
ALL DIED FOR
NO REASON.

JUST TURNED AWAY
FOR A SECOND AND
THEY WERE GONE.

EVERYBODY DIES.



The fan who signed himself "Name Withheld" in issue #3 got LOTS of mail. Fans called him a wuss, Neanderthal, son of a dung beetle, and pompous awipe. Heidi speaks:**

Dear Sam & Co:

First off, as everyone is probably aware, my name is spelled "MacDonald" despite what you may have read.

The letter in Maxx #4 from the "very proud, MALE MAXX fan, nice guy, extraordinaire, avant garde, neat to keen, spiffy #\$\$@ with an attitude problem" is so doofus-esque that I have a hard time believing it's not a put on, but just in case it isn't, this is as good an opportunity as any to lay down some ground rules for what we're dealing with here.

"We males have run this earth very successfully without the help of feminists or those damn liberals for thousands of years."

Well, I suppose if you call thousands of years of genocide, slavery, religious intolerance, sexual, racial and economic oppression and war "successful," then you have a point. I don't think a world where a *Bosnia* or a *Somalia* can happen is "successful," myself.

"Are you aware of the reason women need their own museums and such? The reason is that no one, except for women like Madonna, have done anything that would measure up to what the men of this world have done."

Hm. Laying aside the contradiction inherent in this statement, Mr. MALE MAXX fan, are you aware of the fact that actually women HAVE excelled in every field which they've been permitted to enter? (Sappho predates Madonna by a few centuries, I believe.) I say permitted, because lest we forget, throughout recorded history, women have very systematically been denied the right to own property, the right to inherit, right to divorce, and in some societies, the right to live. (Check out the rate of female infanticide in China, for example.)

Of course, when women have been given a chance, their achievements have been as notable

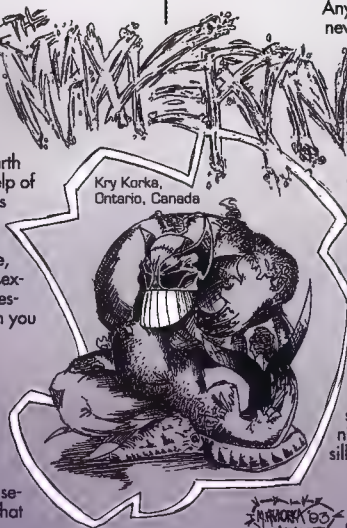
as men's—with the exception that women's accomplishments have been demeaned, diminished, ignored and, when a women hits on something really hot, appropriated by the nearest guy. (For instance, male philosophers turned the study of medicine to "The Humors" which supposedly caused human illness. Meanwhile, female barber/surgeon/midwives relied on their knowledge of which plants actually worked as pain killers, contraceptives, medicines, and so on. This wisdom has come down to us as "Old Wives' Tales", a typical example of the trivialization of female achievements.)

Anyway, this is all old, old news, or should be. But I guess in a world where people can say the Holocaust didn't happen, you can't assume that the truth is going to get out. The facts of

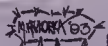
female repression throughout history are elementary compared to the Paglia/Faludi argument. (Even Paglia wouldn't argue that this repression exists; she'd argue over why.)

MALE MAXX fan says he's proud, but I guess not quite proud enough to actually sign his name. But then, who WOULD want to sign his name to such a juvenile, ignorant and just plain silly letter?

Sincerely,
Heidi MacDonald



Kry Karka,
Ontario, Canada



Dear Sam,

I'm impressed that you managed to condense three of my letters into one cohesive package (see Issue #2 of Maxx Traxx.) But...[you knew there was a "but" coming, didn't you?]

My name is "Augie," short for "August." A-U-G-I-E. Got that?

In conclusion: A-U-G-I-E.

Augie De Blicke, Jr.
North Haledon, New Jersey

Sorry, Aug.

Dear Sam,

I noticed the dialogue credits for Maxx #4 were divided between you and Bill Messner-Loeb. Man, what a tender story. I don't know which of you deserves the credit, but someone needs plenty

of recognition for this one. Damn fine work. I'm impressed.

Sincerely,
Matt Ingram
Cedartown, Georgia

Everyone at Maxx,

First of all—The Maxx is great! I read it every month and it just gets better. My favorite issue, though, has to be #4, and I am writing this letter to thank you for turning my day from dark to light.

Right before I got around to reading the latest issue of The Maxx, I was feeling very depressed. I felt like no one understood me or my actions and words which I knew in my heart were morally right. I felt lonely and confused. Also, being a part of a step-family for five years, there are still times when I feel like no one really wants me here, and that hurts a lot.

To sum it all up, I felt like running out in the middle of the busiest street and letting the fastest car have its way with me. But then I read Maxx #4...

I can't honestly say that issue #4 saved my life—I don't think I could ever take my own life because my conscience always kicks in and gives me a million and one reasons not to. I can say, however, that little Sarah made me feel a lot better about things and made me a much stronger person. Oh, and the Isz dressed as car-jackers (MEEPI) made me laugh my head off.

In closing, I'd just like to say that I hope we see a lot more of Sarah (and the Isz.) The Maxx story may be pretty hard to comprehend overall, but I think Issue #4 will be one that Maxx fans will have no trouble understanding.

Thank you,
Michelle

Dear Kieth and Company,

I and my partner B.J. Ramsey have co-founded the Ret'qark'nite Fan Club. Anybody wishing to join the clan can write to me.

Chris Proft
1918 Amelia Avenue
San Pedro, California 90731

I didn't print this guy's whole letter. If you want to see his whole letter, write to him.

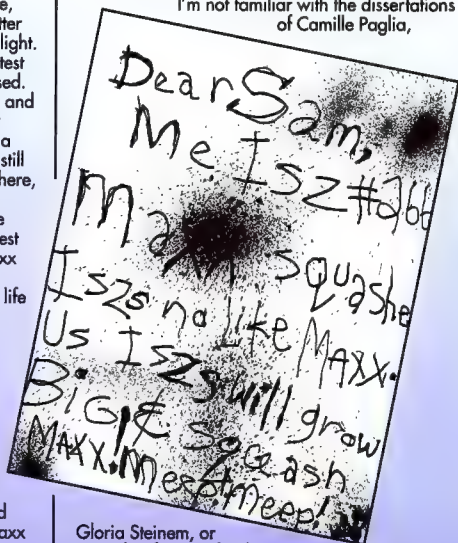


Jorgen Bumann,
Mexico

Dear Sam,

Yours is the only letter page I have written to aside from Groo-Grams (and no, I don't expect to a get a signed Groo paperback since I've seen "so dumb" stuff in the pages of Savage Dragon and, of course, Maxx #4), but the outstanding Sarah story revealed in the fourth issue just plunked me down in front of the word processor and made me write.

I'm not familiar with the dissertations of Camille Paglia,



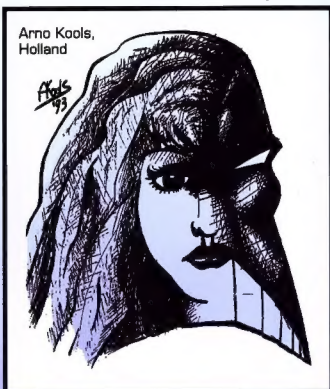
Gloria Steinem, or any other feminist for that matter, so I am unable to analyze the story with any feminist doctrine in mind. Therefore, I will just cut to the chase; it was a spanking good read. I hope to see more of Sarah in future issues. She speaks for a lot of people trying to fit into what can only be described as a F'd up world. Such creative storytelling and strong female characters are sadly missing in comics today. Image should consider themselves lucky to have you and Mr. Loeb's putting out such fine material under their banner.

What is next for Julie and Maxx? I am interested to see how the multi-planed reality they exist on is resolved. It is becoming increasingly clear that these realities are not just products of The Maxx's imagination, since Julie has become too inextricably tied into the whole Leopard Queen thing just to be part of his fantasy. Is she the dominating force behind the varying levels of (un)reality? Has her escapism from childhood traumas become so intense that Pangaea actually became a physically accessible manifestation? In Issue Four, Sarah touched a nerve when she accused Julie of only being able to sustain relationships if she was the controlling force. In creating a world in which The Maxx becomes an integral part, she becomes something of an omniscient matriarch. It could be she needs The Maxx in order to sustain Pangaea. On the other hand, I'm probably way off base. In the real world, so to speak, she seems to be much too caring to be capable of such

manipulation and puppeteering. Besides, she fell victim to an Isz in the fridge in Issue Two. Hey, but what about the Gone guy! I didn't even think about how he fits into the scheme of things. Maybe Mr. Gone is running the show, or is he just a victim too? Didn't Julie shave him a little too close at the end of Issue Two, thus eliminating him from one of the lesser planes? I give up. Thanks for putting up with my ramblings, and giving me some cool characters that I can actually care about.

Faithfully,
Neil Sutton
Aurora,
Ontario,
Canada

Dear Sam,
One suggestion I have is that you have Maxx go absolutely nuts, killin' anyone in his sight except his girlfriend Julie! But then he goes back to normal and everyone and his uncle goes after him.



Sincerely,
Gavin Alarcon
Azusa, California

Cool.

Dear Sam,
What's with Maxx, anyway? All Maxx-heads know he's about 230 lbs. In issues #3 and #4, he looks like a 900 lb. nosetackle who would be lucky to fit through a garage door!

Jeremy Douglas
Ben Lomond, California

Large Maxx = more space=fewer backgrounds = less work.
Can you say, "Hack?"

Dear Mr. Kieth and Mr. Loeb,
By the end of this school year, I will be certified as an English teacher. I have one more semester of taking classes at the University of Iowa. Today one of my instructors asked this question: "What is good literature?" One of my classmates made the comment that comic books were not literature and only escapism. Being a closet-reader of comic books, I stayed quiet. What would my colleagues think if they learned that I read comic books in my spare time?

Reluctantly, I trudged over to my favorite comic store. Maybe I should give up this escapism and spend my time reading the classics by Faulkner, Hemingway, and Fitzgerald. Don't get me wrong. I love these three authors, and The Great Gatsby has to be one of my favorite books of all time. But, as I've come closer to becoming an

English teacher, I've been feeling guilty reading "non-literature." I went through the comic books, picking out the titles I read. I then came to issue four of The Maxx. I had read the first three issues. They were okay, but money's been tight so I've been trying to cut back on how much I spend on comic books a week. After a few minutes, I decided I would stay on to issue five and it was only \$1.95 so I picked it up. My colleagues would probably laugh at me for picking up a comic book about a big purple guy.

I didn't get around to reading it until after classes when I returned to my apartment. The opening page grabbed me as a good piece of literature does. This was terrific writing. Such quiet sadness to the prose, and the pictures complemented the prose quite well. By the end of the issue, I was trying to hold back the tears. After reading this issue, I felt bad that I didn't stand up for the comic book medium. I'm still not comfortable with coming out of the closet, but this issue has reinforced my belief that comic books can aspire to the status of literature with good writing, and art that complements good writing. It is only when the writing is up to par or even surpasses excellent art that a comic book becomes a piece of literature. This is great literature. I only hope that future issues will be of the same or of a better caliber than issue four. Great job, guys. Thanks for making me remember why I read comic books. Maybe someday I will even come out of the closet.

Sincerely,
B. Filip Peters
Iowa City, Iowa

Dear Sir,
You know, ever since you started printing your awesome comic on nice, glossy pages, it's been a lot harder to rip up.

Loyal fan,
Ryan Campeau
Scio, Oregon

Yeah, I noticed.

Dear Sam Kieth,
I have to agree with the Total Maxx Fan from Santa Barbara in #4. Who is Frazetta? More importantly, who is Paglia? I gather they're feminists or something, but I am wondering about this too. And I don't have any wet noodles around right now, so you're going to have to answer this question.

A Maxx fan who doesn't want to sign her name because she's too embarrassed to admit she's clueless on this Paglia thing.
Sam Kieth,

OK...To all you "Meeps" that don't know what Frazetta is...Sit up and listen. It's a cheese, made only in Brooklyn, by this guy named Frank, since the year 1928. So stop asking...

From Shane in Canada
(No, I don't live in an igloo.)

Dear Sam,

When I read that Total Maxx Fan had never heard of Frank Frazetta, I screamed! Who's never heard of Frazetta? Hey, Total! Ever heard of Santa? Odin? Zeus? I liken Mr. Frazetta up there with these three guys (all of them follow the Big Guy, God Himself, of course, with Barry Sanders in a close sixth.)

Bye.

The Sandman
(alias The Real
Phlegm Lord!)

Barry Sanders?

Mr. Kieth,

I think you should pulverize that idiot who asked who Frazetta is. Doesn't he realize what a fool he is? I also think you should come to my house for dinner some time. My mom said you can come over and stay the night if you like. She fixes really good lasagna. If you come, make sure Bill comes too. My mom thinks he's just an adorable young man.

Ken Wiatrek
Pasadena, Texas

Dear Sam,

I have heard of Pangaea. It is what scientists call the single land mass that makes up the seven continents today. This land mass was present around 200 million years ago, when dinosaurs were still around. Could The Maxx be a time-traveler from the past? Maybe reincarnation?

Sincerely,
Mark Blicharz
East Hampton, CT

No.

Sam,

I have been thinking about something. There are rumors that Jim, Todd, and Rob (The Big Guys) have been working on movie deals and action figure deals and such things. Not that I wouldn't mind having a 17-inch Battle Poseable, Kung-Fu grip Maxx figure with thirteen action-packed accessories sitting on my headboard, staring me in the face at night...I mean, who doesn't want that, right?

What I'm saying is, Maxx is destined for greater things! Now think, Sam! What (A) is the greatest achievement a fictional character can achieve in the mainstream world, and (B) has Maxx always been a longtime supporter of?

The answer is Pez! To truly achieve greatness, Maxx NEEDS his own Pez dispenser!

Look back at all of the great achievers that have reached Pezdom! Spiderman, Batman, Charlie Brown, The Truck (er...bad example), Garfield. A Pez dispenser is the ultimate sign of greatness!

So, Sam, get on the horn and call up the Pez Company. Tell them that you want a Pez dispenser. Tell them you want only strawberry packages to come with it. The world is crying

out..."SAM!!! GIVE US OUR MAXX PEZ DISPENSER!!!!"

While you're at it, you could make a Julie dispenser...with a bell bottom! Or maybe an ISZ Pez Dispenser (try saying that ten times fast.)

Sam...Bear down...Get your priorities straight...Get us a Maxx Pez Dispenser. And when they hit the shelves, I'll be the first in line!

Not sane enough to write a real letter,
Jason M. Fox
Henderson, KY

I think this guy's on to something.

Does the Spotted Seussadon have anything to do with Dr. Seuss?

Kevin Regalado
Alhambra, CA

Hopefully we peaked out on Seuss references last issue.

Dear Sam,

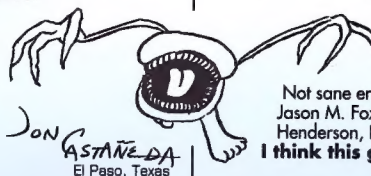
Maxx and Dragon are my favorite comics to read. I found myself reading the letter pages in issue #4. What the "banshee crap" is going on? What's with all this feminist confusion? It's a comic book, for goodness sake. Girls and guys writing in with all their sexist ideas. Why are they reading so deeply into this comic book? They are clearly pulling way more out of the comic than is in it. And you just sit back and feed it by printing the letters and adding little two-cent remarks to perk the controversy. "Julie is a weird girl that has most likely had something awful happen to her in her childhood to make her act..." — yeah, right! Boring-lame! Julie is cool. Bellbottoms (on girls) are freakin' cool. Maybe she likes being weird and different. I do, and so do some of my friends. That's how we escape the real world to the fantasy wonderland of our minds. And this is what comics are all about — not feminist liberals or child molestation. If you want that, there are about 50 talk shows on TV everyday on those subjects. Who cares if Julie is a feminist? What comic book readers care about is Maxx being their hero!

Sincerely,
Ivan Steel
Fort Myers, FL

Dear Sam,

I was reading the letter column in #4 and someone mentioned that Lapin (you had one "p" too many) means "rabbit." It hit me like an anvil. There is a Br'er Rabbit from Disney comics, right? And isn't he a Cajun, like Gambit, who mixes English and French? This would explain why Rabbit was changed to Lapin. Here is my conclusion: The Maxx is actually Gambit disguised as a mutant rabbit (not Usag, Yojimbo!) disguised as The Maxx. I'm either exactly right or very, very stupid.

Matthew Bingham
Pointe-Claire, Quebec,
Canada



**I think you were closer with Usagi:
Yojimbo.**

Kieth,

Read Maxx #4, dug it, gotta critique it. For someone who obviously has never experienced the feelings of what it is to desire suicide, you took a good stab at it. Fact is, it ain't quite that simple.

You said that it was merely a waiting thing for life to change. Sorry, but you don't arrive at suicide overnight. I don't care what anyone says — anyone who ever tries it has carried it with him for a long time.

Fact is, someone in this desperate situation knows all too well that waiting is the problem, not the solution. Waiting doesn't change a damn thing.

Change is the only situation. Of course, you cannot have change without the knowledge of how to change. That is where most people get stuck — you want to help tell the person how to change.

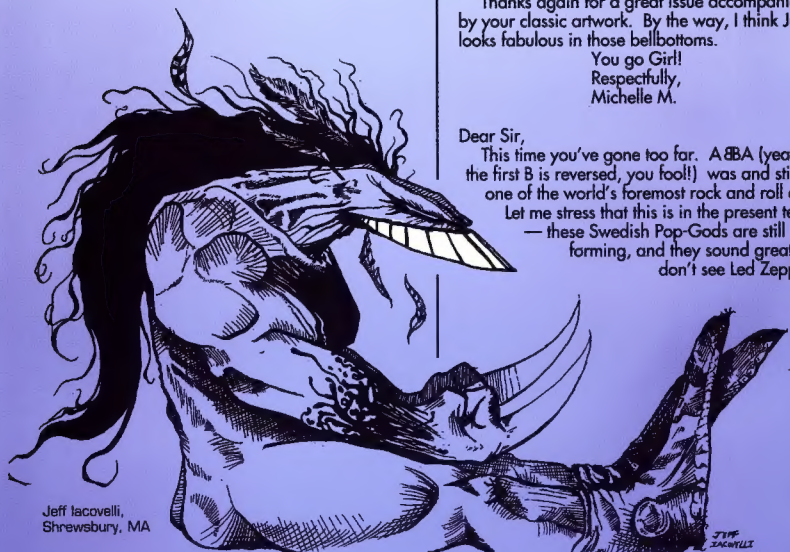
The point is, it is impossible to wait for life to change. It will never happen. You must get off your ass and make the change happen. Waiting plays no part in it.

Believe me, I know. I think of it every day.

On a higher note, I totally dig Julie. You ever change anything about her, and I will personally kick your sold-out a**.

If there is anyone out there at all that can even remotely identify with me, I am curious to hear from you. My name and address are below.

Adam Chance
RD#1 Box 1046
Brodbecks,
PA 17329



Jeff Iacovelli,
Shrewsbury, MA

Dear Mr. Kieth,
Was The Maxx
modelled after a
crescent wrench,
or is the resem-
blance coinci-
dental?

Dwight "Doc"
Courtwright
Gnadenhutten,
Ohio

**MAXX
TOOLS**

Dear Mr. Kieth,

When I
picked up
issue #4
of The
Maxx. I wasn't
ready for the
reaction I had to

it. First, you see
this poor girl totally
freaked by what hap-
pened to her dad hanging
out in underpasses. As if knowing about her
father wasn't enough, here comes "Mom." (For
those of you who don't know what I'm talking
about, go pick up issue #4. The woman is too
much for mere words!)

So, what's a girl to do? Befriend The Maxx, of
course. What really attracted me to the story,
however, was its ending. Sarah could've easily
just given up and blown herself away. Instead,
she drops the gun. The End. Not to her prob-
lems, but to her hating her life so much that she
considered ending it. Sure, she still hangs in the
underpasses, but at least it's without a firearm.

Thanks again for a great issue accompanied
by your classic artwork. By the way, I think Julie
looks fabulous in those bellbottoms.

You go Girl!
Respectfully,
Michelle M.

Dear Sir,

This time you've gone too far. A&B (yeah,
the first B is reversed, you fool!) was and still is
one of the world's foremost rock and roll acts.

Let me stress that this is in the present tense
— these Swedish Pop-Gods are still per-
forming, and they sound great. I
don't see Led Zepplin

doin' any shows lately, and even when they were, they sucked d***. Stairway to Fraggle-Rock, my eye!

Aloha and Adios,
Zsolt Gaspar
Northbrook, IL

Dear Mr. Kieth,

I am deeply upset that you made the statement that A8BA is uncool. If A8BA's so uncool, why have cool people like Erasure and U2 covered A8BA in their respective albums and concerts. Also, I don't know if you are aware of this or not, but in Singapore, A8BA's records sell better than Michael Jackson, Guns n' Roses, or whoever else sells a lot of records these days. Now, you wouldn't want to be alienating all your fans in Singapore, would you? I believe it may even be a federal offense to speak poorly of A8BA in Sweden, so let's not be so hasty about the things we say, all right?

Ryan Schofield
Marion, IL

Dear Mr. Kieth,

I am now giving you a chance to retract a statement you made in issue #4, in order to save yourself face. You seem to be under the impression that A8BA is not cool. **WRONG!!!** I think most people secretly like A8BA, but are too scared to admit it. You are not helping the situation by callin them "uncool!!!"

Sincerely,
Stacie Ponder
Groton, CT

I'm trying really hard to get upset about this...really I am...

Dear Mr. Sam Kieth,

My 14-year-old son Scott buys all your Maxx books. He is a Maxx nut. He begged me to read Maxx #4 'cause he says he and Sarah have lots in common. I did. I cried. I feel very sorry for Sarah and Scott. I said some of those things to Scott that Sarah's mom said to Sarah, and I feel real bad.

Scott sees his dad as a pal and me as bad 'cause I left his "dear ol' dad." Scott doesn't think about how I worked two jobs for years so we could have a house to live in, and his dad never did work a job. I don't mean to whine — lots of folks have it rough. Maybe when Scott and Sarah grow up, they can love and forgive their moms

and know how much their moms love them and went through for them. I used to feel real bad and guilty, but God knows and I know I did my very best to love and raise Scott. Ever since I had him, I just wanted to stay home and be with him, but I had to pay bills and did not have time left to be Scott's buddy after work, due to fixing food and doing clean clothes. I just didn't have any energy left to play.

I'm sorry for Sarah's mom. I bet she feels cheated and broken-hearted, too. Someday I hope Scott and Sarah can know their moms loved them with all they had to give (their lives.)

Thank you.
Scott's mom
So. Sacramento, CA

Dear Mr. Kieth,

I am writing to tell you how incredible issue #4 was. I am sure there are many people who feel like Sarah did in the beginning of the story, and more importantly, how she feels at the end.

But after I read the story, I found myself wondering if, through some cosmic phenomena, this issue was written for me and me alone. While there are lots of differences between the events of my life and Sarah's, the basics are all there: a screwed-up family life, low self-



esteem, the inability to relate to the adults around me, and, of course, the thoughts and attempts at suicide. I love the fact that after Sarah's attempt at suicide, things didn't "magically turn around" for her as they would have in any other given comic, sitcom, or made-for-TV movie. For me, things still haven't "magically turned around." In fact, now I realize there is no "magic" involved because it takes work — hard personal work. It's been months for me. I don't want to kill myself, but I still have lots to work through.

I was having a pretty bad day today — I was feeling alone and depressed. I picked up your book and I feel a little better now — not "magically turned around", but a little better.

A fan,
Michael Wiebe
Santa Fe, New Mexico

P.S. In an attempt to make this letter a little less sappy, I would like to say that Julie is HOT.